



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Department of Workforce Development Modernizes Workforce Development System**

Indianapolis, Ind. – Today the Department of Workforce Development announced an innovative plan to modernize the state's workforce development system and drive regional economic growth.

Ron Stiver, Commissioner for the Department of Workforce Development, believes the new plan will be a major component in helping Indiana's regional economies. "The modernization of our workforce development system will help move Indiana forward through the design and implementation of more flexible regional structures. This plan is directly in-line with Governor Daniels' belief that we must act quickly and boldly to grow Hoosier jobs and personal income."

The current workforce service regional structure was largely designed in 1983 and includes sixteen workforce service regions directed by local workforce investment boards. The new plan proposes a transition to eleven workforce regions that will be directed by regional advisory boards. These modernized regions take into account local commuting patterns, presence of industry clusters, higher education infrastructure, highway infrastructure, metropolitan statistical area locations and other strategic considerations. The design of the new regions was a joint effort between the Department of Workforce Development, Indiana University Business Research Center and Workforce Associates, Inc. with significant input from regional thought leaders.

David Holt, Vice President Workforce Development Policy and Federal Relations for the Indiana Chamber, stated, "DWD's commitment to modernizing Indiana's workforce system will help its regional economies by offering a more flexible, streamlined and regionally driven system. This plan will not only be a positive change for the state, but for all regional economies and industries in Indiana. The business community is solidly behind this important reform."

Local elected officials are pleased as well. Columbus Mayor, Fred Armstrong, welcomed the plan, saying, "Indiana needs to update its current workforce development system. The state's economic needs have changed in the past 23 years and this plan helps meet the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy."

Support for the modernization reached into northern Indiana as well. Jerry Langley, Professor at Notre Dame Mendoza School of Business and incoming Northern Indiana Workforce Development Board Chair, stated, "This modernization is a positive step to move Indiana's economy forward and creates a system that will enable regional economies to create jobs and advance their workforce."

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development is charged with continually improving the Hoosier workforce by assisting companies to create new jobs and improve employee skills. The



agency offers a variety of training and educational grants, partners with the state's 27 WorkOne Centers, administers the unemployment insurance system, provides labor market information, assists employers with preparing workers for layoffs and closures and operates a statewide job placement service.

For more information on this or other DWD programs, call 888-465-4616 or visit the web site at [www.workforce.in.gov](http://www.workforce.in.gov).

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